

Beatrice Cenci, the Beautiful Italian Who New Her Immoral Father

A French Authoress Claims the Right of Her Sex to Slay, But History Shows That Murder is Distinctively a Man's Occupation

OHALL women emulate Judith? It is a novel theory that has been broached, and it has apparently a long way to go before any affirmative answer will be given that will hold good generally in

courts of law or in public opinion. It was propounded by a woman who had been cruelly wronged; it appealed to whatever primal, savage instincts remain in the heart of the sex-and the psychologists who have tried to prove that woman is a savage still have

been too numerous to mention. But when the test of feminine sentiment came to be made, there was an overwhelming nurder.

preponderance of condemnation for her who shall take into her own hands the vengeance reserved to the law.

Yet the feminine verdict, indorsed though it has been by the letter of the law in all lands and among all peoples, flies in the face of the verdicts of history and is set at defiance by almost every practical rule of punishment in the civilized world.

The anomaly is tragic, and it remains one of the century's problems, still to be solved. Meanwhile, it constitutes at once the newest and the oldest puzzle of that branch of criminology which deals with plain, unvarnished

more exalted, found the affectionate name for her ugood Queen Bess. Attempts to enlist the sympathies
of readers or suditors in the woman who slays have
called for the genius of a Sardou and the awful situations of a "La Tosca," if the instinctive sense of
horror for the woman whose hands are imbued with
blood is to be prevented from welling up. Cleopatra,
much admired by her contemporaries, enemies like
Julius Caesar included, would poison a slave as quick
as look at him? but the art of a Theophile Gautier
falls to make her better than repellent, as it fails
to leave the widow of King Candaules look like an
altogether lovable bride for the Gyges she induced
to murder him. exalted, found the affectionate name for her u

MOTIVES OFTEN UNSELECT.

History, unadorned, has generally realed the woman who slays much better. But thus may be because the famous female homicides have had the advantage, so often, of motives which were unselfish, silthough even purely selfish killings sometimes prove to be justified an evidence comes slowly forward to show the mitigating circumstances.

That was the case with the beautiful Beatrice Cencl. For many a long year she borg the offium of unforgivable parricide; and even the drams could do little more for her in the imagination of the world than palliate in some small measure the magnitude of her offense.

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Her sufferings, her retaliation, her fate ware all the products of her time, a period during which the paternal authority was absolute and when any rebellion of child against parent was deemed the most heinous of crimes in the sight of God and man. But of Beatrice Cenci, as time has worn on, history has come to think more pitifully; and, curiously enough, the favorable verdict has been steadily coincident.

with the evolution of modern faith and practice in the theory of the sacredness of childhood. Today the fair Bearrice, bearing only the record of her immoral father in her hands, could stand forth before the world and boildy say: "I slew him. Well, what of it." And the majority of the women writers who now declare Madame Bloch's fate should be the guillotine would filing their arms around in Cenci's neck and seclaim her as heroine and martyr.

Amnesty has even been extended to the memory of the fascinating Blanca Capello, who shally became the wife of Francis, grand duke of Tuscany. Hers was for centuries a detested name among the Florentines, with whom the traditions of the assessinations shows believed to have instigated remained a continual source of horror. Blanca had not a moral quality to redeem her reputation; she was as heartiese as she proved unchaste; as ambitious as she was acheming; as unfillal as she was adventurous. But she managed her plans so well and she displayed such remarkable qualities in government; once she had in her grasp the power she covered, that blographies of distinguished women compiled today do not refresh from allotting her a high right among the great women of the world.

It needs unadultgraded criminality, like Clytemnestra's, to force history into giving the murderesher just dues. Her linises with Aegisthus might have been passed over as romantically as the peets gloze the elopement of Helen with Paris. But when, on his return from the Trojan war. Agamemben, her husband, met death at Clytemnestra's hands, even the most gallant of historians, in the mast fabulous period of Grecian chronicles, had to acquience in the fitness of the destiny which left the murdereses to be alain by Orestes, her own son. She was as impossible for a historical "whitewash" as was Locusta, that poisoner of Rome, whom Agrippina fired to hill Claudius and Nero to deatroy Britanjicus. A Nero might reward her, as Nero did, but when the Emperor Galba had her executed the chroniclers of all time could only

Leave the murderess free only from the taint of being despicable, and she manages to loom in greater grandeur as the ages roll away. Semiramis could abandon her husband for her king. Ninus of Assyria, as Bianca Capello betrayed Bononovanturi for Francis of Tuscany. She could rule in the ruins of ampires, ensanguined with the blood of Persia. Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia. But that she founded Babylen and made the land rich with her gigantic works of improvement has ever been accepted as ample compensation for her crimes against humanity. The world has given her the same carte blanche of acquittal it provides for male slaughterers like Napoleon and Alexander.

woman is justified in slaying?

History and the law have found plenty of them, and common sense does not hesitate to agree with both.

S THERE any set of circumstances in which a woman is justified in slaying?

History and the law have found plenty of them, and common sense does not hesitate to them, and common sense does not hesitate to see with both.

But those circumstances, such as they have been. But those circumstances, such as they have been er conditions, in which men and women can be ally culpable, the world has consistently regarded woman's sin of murder as unnatural and the n's as something not very far from normal. And, h that, the world has formed a habit of sternly signing the men and of weeping sympathetically igning the men and of weeping sympathetically in the men and agree with both.

But those circumstances, such as they have been, would have justified men as well. Under most of the other conditions, in which men and women can be equally culpable, the world has consistently regarded the woman's sin of murder as unnatural and the man's as something not very far from normal. And, with that, the world has formed a habit of sternly hanging the men and of weeping sympathetically ever the women, until it's as hard to hang a murderess as it would have been to prevent her crime once she was resolved upon it.

Here is the tragedy that flung the whole question into the limelight:

Madame Lawrence Rachel Bloch, of Paris, brillant

into the limelight:

Madame Lawrence Rachel Bloch, of Paris, brilliant writer, charming lecturer, club associate of the Pucheshe d'Uses, admired for her genius under the pen hame of Frederick de Beauliet, called on Mrs. James Bridgman, a beautiful American resident of Paris, whose husband was cashier there for an American life insurance company. The scene was Mrs. Bridgman and M. Bloch's apartments, at 16 Rue Vignon.

"You have taken from me my husband," said

"You have taken from me my husband," said Madame Bloch. "He has been your slave for four od man, but your fascination him recreant to every duty of his family and his home. He lives a life of anguish and remorse; he home. He lives a life of anguish and remoras; he leaves to me, his wife, and to his children, all the unhappiness they can bear, and more. Will you not give him up to us? Will you not be content with your four years of possession? Have you not, in your mother's heart—for you have a son of your own—that sentiment of pity which should let you feel for us who are forselven? for us, who are forsaken?"

"LOVE BEFORE EVERYTHING"

"My love before everything," Madame Block quoted her rival as answering. "I will not give

The wife flung herself at her rival's feet; in tears she implored her to be merciful. But Mrs. Bridgman merely shrugged her shoulders. Infuri-ated, Madame Bloch whipped out the revolver she

carried and shot her rival dead.

It has become a celebrated case, mainly because it represents the situation of so many wives in France, lacking only the trade denouement. Thou-sands of women, when they read the thrilling "confession" prepared by a writer so expert and a speaker so elequent as the prisoner, realized that their own situation was in nowise different from that which she had faced during the years before her desperation drove her to appeal to the scant me of a successful foe in the lists of love. Many of the had borne their neglect with no reprisal other than the reproaches they visited upon their erring has-bands; others had revenged themselves in kind. But none had dreamed of reverting to the fundamental eavagery of slaying the woman who took their men

Was Madame Bloch a ploneer of a new evangel? Had she with that swift pistol shot, cleared a wi to end the infidelity of husbands? Truly-and Paris smiled grimly-that was the way a husband should strend to the lover of his wife; and when husbands did attend to the lovers so, the courts never failed to find the provocation great enough to let them crade the guillotine. Madame Bloch's head would aray on her shoulders for many a year to come, the critical Parisians guessed.

Madame Bloch thinks so, too; she even announced from her cell that innumerable letters had reached her from women commending her for her act, many of the letters having been written by other women seathers.

element of provocation and outrage appeared to have been present to inflame the deserted wife against a rival whom in no other way she could defeat. The murderess in fiction is usually dealt with as harshly as her colleagues of her own sex have dealt with Madame Bloch. Lady Macbeth, the real crimi-nal in Shakespeare's powerful tragedy, was an object of horror for the London audiences, who, in contem-plating the making of history by their pitiless Queen Elizabeth with episodes as bloody and for motives no

N THE big railway depots of the cities, and again in the more important junction stations, a curious bit of baggage is liable to fall into the hands of the attendants.

It may weigh from 10 to 40 pounds and, as a rule, it is well wrapped to prevent exposure to the sir, for it is very susceptible to injury and requires probably the greatest care of any bundle man or

OBODY has ever solved the question of these for-saken waifs of the depots. Sverybody who has snything to do with carelaking there, from the tender-hearted but cautious matron to the peace-

tender-hearted but cautious matron to the peacepreserving but equally pitiful cop, has speculated us the
causes that can induce a mother to simply quit her job
and leave her beby to the chance mercies of a world that
cause no more for the child than it does for a stray pup,
and considers it a good deal more of a nuisance.

Some necessity, of course, drives her to it; even the
most cynical of freight handlers, whom experience with
harance makes very cynical indeed, returns to consider
the idea that any mother to sakes her child merchy by

woman ever carries.



cause she deem't care enough for R to keep R.

The common run of depot opinion is that poverty must
be the reason. But that view is in direct defiance of syldence applying to more than half the cause. The methors
have been too comfortably dramed, the children prove too
well clad, to let it be believed the regard edge of business

have been too comfortably dramed, the ciddings prove too have been too comfortably dramed, the ciddings prove too well clad, to let it be petered the ranged onto of more been reacted ofther of them.

Poverty, but a poverty not marry to der as teo-name of other waters committee to the cidings of other waters committee to the cidings of other waters committee to the cidings of other waters of the cidings of the cidings of the cidings of cidings and cidings of the cidings of cidings of cidings of the cidings of cid

There is saldem, or never, any address tag, forwarding slip or mark of identification. The finder can't tell to whom it belongs, or to whom it is consigned. It seems to just happen. It is never regarded as treasure trove, although it is the most precious thing this world knows. And, for all the neglect it has suffered, for all the desperate chances of ruin it runs, it may last for seventy years or more, and prove, in one way or another, of the ut-

most value to mankind.

It is always alive, and very often hicking. It may be 3 months old, or it may be 3 years old.

It is usually a beby; but many a time it is already big enough to be called a child.

And of all the surprising persons who can be thought of as possibly formaking so helpless and door a creature, she who shandons it is marrly always the little one's own mother.

NOT A TRACE LEFT

At no stage of their pitiful progress to charity's did any trace of their identity appear. The law not tell his name or address, and not a stitch of garments had a single identifying more. It was acquaints absence of any hint which lent enter to belief that the mother had delignment generally formalise if rither than that some accident or machines had palson her.